

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 AEC-11 OIC-04 IO-14 CIAE-00

PM-07 INR-10 L-03 NEA-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 USIA-15 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 SS-20 NSC-10 H-03 OMB-01

DRC-01 /164 W

----- 022712

R 171534Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 626

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 9521

MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: TEXT OF NETHERLANDS REP'S CONVERSATION WITH
SOVIET REP

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN
NETHERLANDS REP (QUARLES) AND SOVIET REP (KHLESTOV) REPORTED TO
AD HOC GROUP NOVEMBER 16.

BEGIN TEXT:

CONVERSATION OF NETH REP WITH AMBASSADOR KHLESTOV, SOVIET REP,
NOV. 14.

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KHLESTOV MADE USUAL REMARKS ABOUT UNPRODUCTIVE LINE PURSUED BY

WESTERN DELEGATIONS IN SETTING FORTH THEIR BASIC PRINCIPLES INSTEAD OF DISCUSSING CONCRETE PROPOSALS AND ASKED WHEN WE INTENDED TO MAKE MORE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS. NETH. REP. POINTED OUT THAT WE HAD ALREADY STARTED TO DO SO BUT WOULD SOON BIND THE STRANDS TOGETHER AND MAKE PROPOSALS OF A MORE SPECIFIC NATURE.

IN THIS CONTEXT KHESTOV COMPLAINED ABOUT REPEATED REFERENCE IN WESTERN STATEMENTS TO SOVIET OFFENSIVE CAPABILITIES (HE EVEN USED THE WORD "AGGRESSIVE" BUT ACKNOWLEDGED SUCH A WORD HAD NOT BEEN USED BY WEST) AND THAT THIS WAS GETTING THE SOVIET DELEGATION RATHER WORKED

UP. HE HOPED WE WOULD NOT CONTINUE AS OTHERWISE HE WOULD BE OBLIGED TO REPLY IN A SIMILAR WAY.

NETH REP POINTED OUT THAT ALLIES ONLY SPOKE OF CAPABILITIES, NOT INTENTIONS, AND THAT TO EXPLAIN OUR THESIS OF DISPARITIES AND THE CONCERN CERTAIN FORCE DISPARITIES WERE CAUSING US. IN FURTHER DISCUSSING THIS QUESTION OF DISPARITIES, THE EXISTENCE OF WHICH KHESTOV OF COURSE DENIED, NETH REP LAID STRESS ON THE FACT THAT EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WERE DEEPLY CONCERNED BY THIS PROBLEM WHICH COULD NOT BE IGNORED IN THE CONTEXT OF MBFR AGREEMENTS AND WOULD HAVE TO BE ADDRESSED. NOT ONLY DID EQUAL PERCENTAGE REDUCTIONS ACTUALLY INCREASE THE EXISTING DISPROPORTION (IN THIS RESPECT THE SOVIET FORMULA WAS NOT OBJECTIVE) BUT FURTHERMORE REDUCTION AGREEMENT THAT DID NOT INTRODUCE APPROXIMATE PARITY IN CENTRAL EUROPEAN GROUND FORCE RELATIONS WOULD GIVE LEGAL STATUS TO A DISEQUILIBRIUM AND CONFER A PERMANENT MILITARY SUPERIORITY IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE WEST. THIS SURELY WAS AN UNACCEPTABLE SITUATION FOR ALL EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WHICH WERE SEEKING TO ESTABLISH HARMONIOUS AND CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS IN ALL FIELDS, AN OBJECTIVE THAT COULD ONLY BE ACHIEVED IN A SITUATION OF APPROXIMATE PARITY IN FORCE RELATIONSHIPS. TO POINT TO A SO CALLED WORLD WIDE BALANCE IN FORCE RELATIONSHIP WAS NO ADEQUATE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEM OF DISPARITIES AS WE WEST EUROPEANS EXPERIENCE IT.

KHESTOV FURTHER ARGUED THE NEED OF INCLUDING NATIONAL FORCES IN THE FIRST STAGE REDUCTIONS. ALTHOUGH HE ADMITTED THAT WHAT THEY HAD IN MIND (HE SPECIFIED THAT THE 20,000 CUT WOULD BE SPLIT UP ACCORDING TO EXISTING FORCE RELATIONSHIPS) WAS NO SUBSTANTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO THE OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS, BUT AT LEAST IT HAD THE MERIT

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OF BEING A START, AND ALSO OF PREVENTING AN INCREASE IN FORCE LEVELS. HE RETURNED REPEATEDLY TO THIS POINT. (IT THEREFORE SEEMS OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE THAT THE WEST ADDRESSES IT IN ITS OUTLINE PROPOSAL.)

HE ASKED WHAT PREVENTED US FROM DEALING WITH THE NON-US FORCES AT FROM THE BEGINNING.

NETH REP ARGUED THAT TO DO SO WOULD GREATLY BURDEN THE FIRST PHASE; THAT THE PROPOSALS OF EQUAL PERCENTAGES MADE BY THE SU WERE TOO SIMPLY AND OVERLOOKED THE PROBLEM OF DISPARITIES WHICH WOULD HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH SOMEHOW IN GREAT DETAIL.

KHLESTOV SEEMED TO ADMIT THE REASONING IN FAVOUR OF A FIRST STAGE LIMITED TO US AND SU FORCES BUT WONDERED WHAT THEN. HE HAD NOT QUITE GRASPED HOW WE SAW THE WHOLE OPERATION IN SUCCESSIVE PHASES. HE WONDERED WHAT WOULD BE THE TIME LAG BETWEEN THE TWO, WHAT ASSURANCES THERE EXISTED AS TO CONTEXT ETC. OF 2ND PHASE. A MERE COMMITMENT TO NEGOTIATE DID NOT SEEM ENOUGH.

END TEXT. HUMES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MUTUAL FORCE REDUCTIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, COMMITTEE MEETINGS, ARMS CONTROL MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 17 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973VIENNA09521
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: VIENNA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731127/aaaaatih.tel
Line Count: 129
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ACDA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <28-Aug-2001 by smithrj>; APPROVED <31-Oct-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBFR: TEXT OF NETHERLANDS REP'S CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET REP
TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005